

IN THE CLAIMS

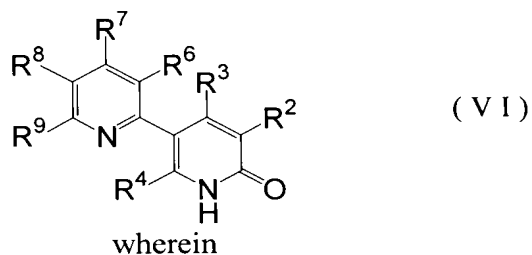
Please amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1-2 (Canceled).

Claim 3 (Canceled).

Claims 4-5 (Canceled).

Claim 6 (New): A production method of a 5-(2'-pyridyl)-2-pyridone derivative represented by the formula (VI)



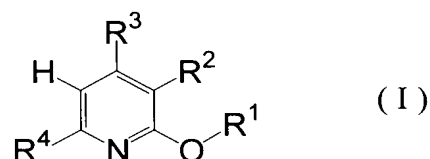
R^2 , R^3 and R^4

are each a hydrogen atom, an alkyl group optionally having substituent(s), an aryl group optionally having substituent(s), an alkoxy group optionally having substituent(s) or an aryloxy group optionally having substituent(s), or R^2 and R^3 optionally form, together with a carbon atom bonded thereto, a ring optionally having substituent(s), and

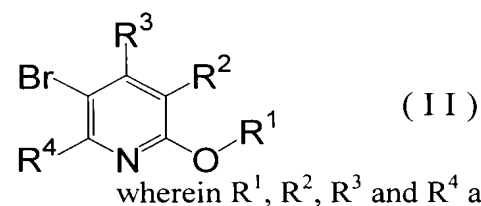
R^6 , R^7 , R^8 and R^9

are each a hydrogen atom, an alkyl group optionally having substituent(s) or an aryl group optionally having substituent(s), or R^6 and R^7 , R^7 and R^8 , or R^8 and R^9 optionally form, together with a carbon atom bonded thereto, a ring optionally having substituent(s),

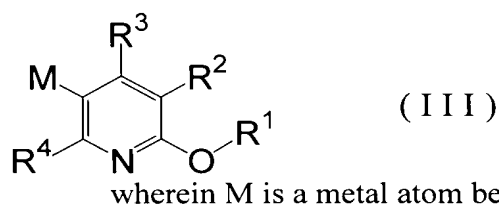
which comprises reacting a pyridine derivative represented by the formula (I)



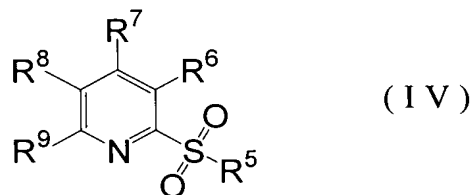
wherein R¹ is an alkyl group optionally having substituent(s) or an aryl group optionally having substituent(s), and R², R³ and R⁴ are as defined above, with a brominating agent to give a 5-bromopyridine derivative represented by the formula (II)



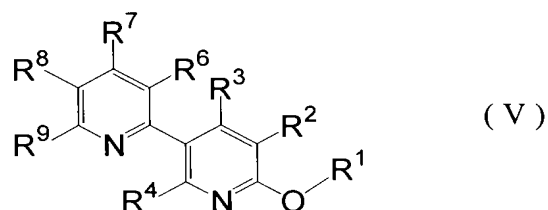
bromopyridine derivative (II) with a metallizing agent to give an organometallic compound represented by the formula (III)



and R⁴ are as defined above, reacting the obtained organometallic compound (III) with a 2-sulfonylpyridine derivative represented by the formula (IV)



wherein R⁵ is an alkyl group optionally having substituent(s) or an aryl group optionally having substituent(s), and R⁶, R⁷, R⁸ and R⁹ are as defined above, to give a 6-alkoxy-3,2'-bipyridine derivative represented by the formula (V)



wherein R^1 , R^2 , R^3 , R^4 , R^6 , R^7 , R^8 and R^9 are as defined above, and hydrolyzing the obtained 6-alkoxy-3,2'-bipyridine derivative (V).

Claim 7 (New): The production method of claim 6, wherein the organometallic compound is a compound of the formula (III) wherein M is a lithium atom.

Claim 8 (New): The production method of claim 6 or 7, wherein, in the formula (VI), R^2 , R^3 , R^4 , R^6 , R^7 , R^8 and R^9 are each a hydrogen atom.

Claim 9 (New): The production method of claim 6 or 7, wherein, in the formula (I), R^1 is a methyl group.

Claim 10 (New): The production method of claim 6 or 7, wherein, in the formula (IV), R^5 is a phenyl group.

Claim 11 (New): The production method of claim 6, wherein the metallizing agent is an n-butyllithium.

Claim 12 (New): The production method of claim 6, wherein the brominating agent is a bromine.

Claim 13 (New): The production method of claim 6,

wherein

R^2 , R^3 , R^4 , R^6 , R^7 , R^8 and R^9 of the formula (VI) are each a hydrogen atom,

R^1 of the formula (I) is a methyl group;

the brominating agent is a bromine;

the metallizing agent is an n-butyllithium;

the organometallic compound is a compound of the formula (III) wherein M is a lithium atom; and

R⁵ of the formula (IV) is a phenyl group.